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## **State Architect Launches Initiative to Save Water and Energy at Public Schools**

*Noted architectural firms are developing innovative, sustainable design concepts for classrooms*

**Sacramento** – California’s State Architect has launched a forward-thinking new initiative to highlight ways to improve the built environment while simultaneously greening California’s aging school facilities with design concepts that will reduce energy and water consumption at campuses across the state.

The initiative, dubbed **7x7x7: Design, Energy, Water** will engage **seven** noted architectural firms to develop **seven** case studies in sustainable school design, for **seven** representative school campuses.

As framed by State Architect Chester A. Widom, FAIA, “the ultimate goal of 7x7x7 is to initiate a conversation among school superintendents, school facilities personnel, boards of education, and other key decision makers for school construction, so that we all reimagine together how schools can be renovated to reduce energy and water usage and create great opportunities for education.”

“There are thousands of buildings on school campuses up and down the state that have great bones and present great opportunities for renovation and modernization to both enhance the learning environment and reduce energy and water usage, and to capture cost savings in maintenance and operations over the long term,” said State Architect Widom. “These cost savings can then be redirected to student learning and education.”

**7x7x7: Design, Energy, Water** is in keeping with Governor Brown’s ambitious climate change and sustainability goals outlined in [Executive Order B-18-12](#), [Proposition 39](#), and the [Governor’s 2015 inaugural speech](#).

“As stewards of the natural environment, we as a state are engaging the creativity of the design community to help us build better schools,” said Daniel C. Kim, Director of the California Department of General Services. “We believe that by working together we can build schools that provide a superior learning environment, while reducing life cycle costs through conservation of energy and natural resources.”

The architectural firms that are developing case studies for 7x7x7 are Aedis Architects (San Jose), DLR Group (Riverside), Ehrlich Architects (Culver City), Hamilton + Aitken Architects (San Francisco), HGA (Santa Monica), Lionakis (Sacramento), and WRNS Studio (San Francisco).

“These are cutting-edge firms doing visionary work to promote sustainability in architectural design, and we are very fortunate to have them contribute their creativity and expertise,” said Widom.

In addition, Tim Culvahouse, FAIA, will compare and contrast the case studies, and write the executive summary for the final report. Mr. Culvahouse is an architect, academic, editor of architectural journals, and a highly-regarded consultant to architects.

The conceptual case studies will be presented at four regional events scheduled for the end of January 2016. A final report that includes an executive summary and the seven case studies will be published following a “call to action” event in Sacramento at the end of February 2016.

The California Energy Commission and the American Institute of Architects-California Council will partner with DSA on this initiative.

More information about 7x7x7 and the upcoming events in January and February of 2016 can be found at [www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa/Programs/progSustainability](http://www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa/Programs/progSustainability).

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*As part of the California Department of General Services, the California Division of the State Architect (DSA) provides design and construction oversight for K-12 schools, community colleges, and various other state-owned and leased facilities. DSA also develops accessibility, structural safety, and historical building codes and standards utilized in various public and private buildings throughout the state of California.*